



the gull

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The Arctic Comes to Berkeley

The Arctic wilderness is a land few of us will have the opportunity to visit so our November general membership program will bring the tundra and its wildlife to us. Musk oxen, Gyrfalcons and Arctic wolves are included in the large cast of this professionally produced film. Some of you will recall Carl Maslowski and Edgar Jones, the film's makers, who visited the Bay Area with National Audubon's Nature Program.

Margaret Thornburg, a veteran of a number of trips to the Bathurst Inlet area where this film was made, will introduce the film and share some of her Arctic experiences. Information will also be available for those interested in travel to this area with the GGAS sponsored tour in July, 1980.

The meeting will be held at the Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley. The date to mark is Thursday, November 8, and the program begins at 7:30 p.m.

—RAY HASEY, *Program Chairman*

Field Trips Calendar

Sunday, November 4 — Tennessee Valley. See the October Gull for details.

Saturday, November 10 — Lake Merced. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Lake Merced Circle (at the south end of Sunset Blvd. in San Francisco). Lunch is optional. This is a fine time to see wintering land and water birds. Leader: Aileen Pierson (567-4163). (✓)

Sunday, November 11 — Limantour Natural Area and Bolinas

Lagoon. Meet at 7 a.m. at the Larkspur Ferry Terminal parking lot Section H. The terminal is just east of the Sir Francis Drake Blvd. exit from Hwy. 101. We will carpool and caravan from here to the coast. If you wish to carpool from the East Bay, call the leader for details. Bring lunch, a scope and clothes appropriate for inclement weather. If it rains call the leader because the trip may be cancelled. Leader: Chris Carpenter (376-6807). (✓)

Wednesday, November 14 — Lake Merritt, Oakland. Mini trip to see wintering waterfowl. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Rotary Science building which is located at the north end of the lake. Bring scopes. If it rains the trip is cancelled. Leaders: Ruth Voss (525-8032) and Delpha de Timofev (632-5176).

Saturday, November 17 — Bodega Bay. Meet at 9 a.m. in the Tides Restaurant upper parking lot in the town of Bodega. If you wish to carpool, meet at the Larkspur Ferry Terminal, Section H. The terminal is just east of the Sir Francis Drake Blvd. exit from Hwy. 101. Because the leader will meet the group in Bodega, carpoolers should make arrangements between themselves. They should leave the ferry terminal by 7:45 a.m. From Hwy. 101 in Petaluma, take the Bodega Bay exit and drive west to the coast. Bring lunch, scope and clothes appropriate for inclement weather. Leader: Betty BurrIDGE (707-527-0225). (✓)

Thursday, November 22 — Traditional Thanksgiving outing to Point Reyes National Seashore. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Larkspur Ferry Terminal, Section H, or at 10 a.m. at the Point Reyes National Seashore headquarters at Olema. We will have a leisurely day of birding and hiking in the headquarters area and Limantour Natural Area. We generally see an excellent variety of waterfowl, shore birds and land birds. The day will end with the Thanksgiving dinner (\$7+) at Jerry's Farmhouse in the town of Olema. Bring a light lunch, scope and clothes for cool and windy weather. Leader: Barry Spitz (454-2769) between 6 and 9 p.m. (✓)

Sunday, November 25 — Oursan Trail. We will take a 4 to 5 mile walk around Briones Reservoir on EBMUD's Oursan Trail to see ducks, geese and land birds. Take Hwy. 24 east to the Orinda turnoff, turn left and follow the San Pablo Dam road about two miles to Bear

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Creek turnoff; turn right and drive about two more miles to the EBMUD Briones Staging Area, just south of the park entrance. Wildcat Canyon Drive across Tilden Park from the top of Spruce St. in Berkeley will also take you to the Bear Creek Road. If we have had a substantial rain that week we will bird in Briones Park as Oursan would be impassible. Meet at 9 a.m., bring lunch. Leaders: Gene Hull (525-6893), Pat Triggs (664-8502). (✓)

Saturday/Sunday December 8-9 — Sacramento and Gray Lodge Wildlife Refuges. On **Saturday** meet at 9 a.m. in parking lot #14 at Gray Lodge. Approach via Hwy. 99 and follow the signs out of Live Oak or Gridley. On **Sunday** meet at 8 a.m. at the Sacramento Wildlife Refuge headquarters 7 miles south of Willows. We plan to get together for dinner in Willows Saturday night. There is a state campground in Colusa. For those wishing to stay in a motel, the Blue Gum in Willows (916-934-5401) is suggested. From the Bay Area drive east on I-80 to I-505 in Vacaville, take I-505 to I-5 and drive north to Willows for lodging or turn off sooner for the refuges. Bring lunch, scopes and clothes appropriate for the valley in December. Leaders: Dolores and Peter White (229-1714). (✓)

Carpooling: Carpooling arrangements can be made for trips marked with (✓). If you are offering or need a ride, please call Kate Partridge at work (642-6881, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.) or at home before 9 p.m. (548-0779). Leaders of two separate trips recently mentioned, in response to the blurb in the September *Gull*, that almost every car driven on their respective trips had at least 2 passengers and that several cars had four. Wonderful!

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

September Observations—Through October 2

The birder's month started very slowly, but after the big late rush of rarities the only "stinker" was the San Jose sewage spill at Alviso. Seriously, the magnitude of this ecological disaster remains to be seen. As this area is only now being opened to public access our familiarity with it is limited. My few forays into these rich bird habitats all just preceded the spill and I have received no direct reports since. However, an unusual concentration of egrets and Brown Pelicans at Doolittle Pond Sept. 23-24 (LF, *et al.*) hints of an evacuation of South Bay areas. Such an evacuation was expected, due to the death of aquatic animals that constitute the birds' food.

SWIMMERS

Because Monterey pelagic birding is uniquely excellent within ten miles of shore, birding boats seldom venture out to really deep water.

During Septembers when the warm offshore water is within reach this effort may be rewarded with birds atypical nearer shore. A trip 25 miles out on Sept. 17 proved this with **more than 8** Flesh-footed Shearwaters, **more than 10** Long-tailed Jaegers, **14** Craveri's Murrelets and a Leach's Storm-Petrel (RS, *et al.*)! The usual Monterey pelagic route on Sept. 29 distributed 3 Flesh-footed Shearwaters (WFO), a **Long-tailed Jaeger** (WFO) and **2** Craveri's Murrelets (JM) among 3 boats. Earlier, **2** Craveri's Murrelets passed Pt. Pinos, Pacific Grove, Sept. 3 (RS). Other notable alcids were 2 or 3 Tufted Puffins in Monterey Bay Sept. 22 (LAAS, DL, *et al.*) and one there Sept. 28 (DR, *et al.*).

This fall's first Blue-winged Teal was at the Castroville Sewage Ponds Sept. 28 (BDP, LCB), with 4 there two days later (JML, EG). Muddy Hollow's Tufted Duck returned early, at least by Sept. 29 (mob). At least one Harlequin Duck still frequents the Farallones (PRBO). Parasitic Jaegers were widely reported from offshore, coast and San Francisco Bay. Among the latter, the one chasing terns at Alviso Sept. 3 (SFB, JM, MW, NC) was as far into the Bay as one can go. The lone Franklin's Gull report was of a first year bird at Pt. Pinos Sept. 21 (BC, PW). A Black Tern remained at the Bay Bridge Toll Plaza through Sept. 8 (JiM, JW).

WADERS

The hybrid Little Blue Heron X Snowy Egret (but no Little Blues) was seen again on San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge near Alviso Sept. 3 (SFB, JM, MW, NC). This just preceded the sewage spill there. A concentration of **86** Cattle Egrets 12 miles east of Los Banos in mid-September (RS) augurs a major invasion of the Bay Area later this fall. American Golden Plover, Baird's Sandpiper and Pectoral Sandpiper were all widely reported in small numbers around the Bay and especially along the coast. While the former two species seemed in normal numbers, many observers believed that Pectorals were more widespread and numerous than usual, despite the maximum being only 9 at Stafford Lake, Marin County, Sept. 28 (RS). Rarer shorebirds were single Semipalmated Sandpipers on Sept. 3 (RS) and Sept. 12 (JL), a Solitary Sandpiper on Sept. 9 (DDeS, *et al.*), all at the Watsonville Sewage Ponds, and a Solitary Sandpiper Sept. 12 (JE). After last year's flight this month's **3 Buff-breasted Sandpipers** might not seem impressive. One appeared at Doran Park, Bodega Bay, Sept. 7 (DG), 2 were seen there Sept. 9-14 (MLR, PA, DS, mob) and one stayed through Sept. 16 (PRBO). The other **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** was at Hall Ranch, Pt. Reyes, Sept. 22-23 (BDP, JP, JM, SL, *et al.*). Nearly as rare were the female **Ruffs** ("Rceves"): one at the Watsonville Sewage

Ponds Sept. 8 through at least Sept. 17 (mob) and an apparently different individual two miles south at Zmudowski State Beach at least Sept. 25-29 (mob).

HAWKS AND OWLS

Excellent hawk flights at Pt. Diablo in the last half of September included record numbers of Broad-winged Hawks: one each on Sept. 18 (BP, *et al.*), Sept. 19 (JiM), Sept. 20 (RS), Sept. 22 (GH), 6 on Sept. 23 (RS, SW, *et al.*), 3 Sept. 30 (BT), about 20 Oct. 2 (EE, GH, *et al.*) and probably others that observers failed to report properly. Another Broad-wing visited Bolinas Sept. 20 (CBu). Rare on the coast, Swainson's Hawks passed Pt. Diablo Sept. 23 (RS) and Monterey Sept. 30 (BDP, LCB, EH). Pt. Diablo and Pt. Reyes both hosted a scattering of Ferruginous Hawks (mob) and one was at Fremont Sept. 15 (SFB), a very "good" early showing. (Remember, a "good" year for this sort of bird may be a bad year for the individuals induced by stress to move far and early. Of course, if the stresses are from population pressures due to high reproductive output the year would be a good one for the population. If due to food shortage, you've got a bad year again!). Similarly rather early Short-eared Owls inhabited outer Pt. Reyes in late September (mob) and one was on Bay Farm Island Sept. 26 (AC, LF).

VAGRANT WARBLERS

This month was poor for vagrants until the coastal overcast returned and a moderate wave hit Point Reyes Sept. 23. As these birds departed a massive wave arrived there Sept. 27. Since then there has been gradual turnover, with departures balanced by arrivals and many vagrants always present. Other coastal spots such as San Francisco and the Monterey Peninsula had their best days from Sept. 29 on. Southeast Farallon Island received small waves of vagrants on Sept. 14, 18, 20 and 22, when my detailed report (PRBO) ends. Although a listing of the Farallon birds from the late September rush must await my next column, we do know that the Island had warbler species and numbers similar to Point Reyes, including another **Mourning Warbler**. However, the Farallones also had Clay-colored Sparrows, Lark Buntings, a **Painted Bunting** and Northern California's first **Sprague's Pipit** (PRBO).

The following table of vagrant warblers is chronological within species except when grouped to show geographical affinities and individual movements. In deciding which reports refer to the same individuals I have generally been conservative, assuming minimal turnover and long visits and allowing for probable movements among Pt. Reyes ranches without excessive lumping. The table lists 173 individuals of 19 species.

Black-and-white Warbler (total 6)			
1	Rodeo Lagoon	Sept. 10	BS
1	Farallones	Sept. 14	PRBO
1	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Sept. 23	GZ
1	Carmel River Mouth	Sept. 27-29	DR, <i>et al.</i>
1	Olema Marsh	Sept. 29-30	RS, <i>et al.</i>
1	Stow Lake, G.G. Park	Oct. 2	LCB
Worm-eating Warbler (total 1)			
1	Rodeo Lagoon	Sept. 12	BS
Tennessee Warbler (total 5)			
1	Mendoza	Sept. 25	AG, WG
1	Fish Docks	Sept. 25-Oct. 1	JM, mob
1	Nunes	Sept. 27-28	JM, mob
1	Spaletta	Sept. 28	JM, CC, JL
1	Pt. Lobos	Sept. 30	EH
Virginia's Warbler (total 1)			
1	Farallones	Sept. 2-5	PRBO
Northern Parula (total 9)			
2	Lincoln Park, S.F.	Sept. 1 (1 to Sept. 9)	mob
1	Jewel Lake, Tilden Park	Sept. 9	DE
1	Fish Docks	Sept. 23-26	JML, EM, mob
1	Fish Docks	Sept. 27-30	RS, mob
1 more	Fish Docks	Sept. 30	mob
1	Stow Lake, G.G. Park	Sept. 26-Oct. 2	DEd, LCB
1	El Carmelo		
	Cemetery, P.G.	Sept. 27	DR
1	Veterans Park, Monterey	Sept. 29	AH, DLi
Magnolia Warbler (total 7)			
1	Farallones	Sept. 17	PRBO
1	Farallones	Sept. 22	PRBO
1	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Sept. 25-Oct. 2	JM, mob
1 more	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Oct. 2	RS
1	Abandoned Ranch	Sept. 29	DSc
1	Lincoln Park, S.F.	Sept. 29	DEd
1	Fish Docks	Sept. 30-Oct. 2	JM, mob
Cape May Warbler (total 2)			
1	Nunes (first Lighthouse Sept. 27)	Sept. 27-Oct. 2	RS, JM, mob
1	Fish Docks	Oct. 1	JR, BR
Black-throated Blue Warbler (total 5)			
male	Mendoza	Sept. 27	JM, <i>et al.</i>
male	Nunes	Sept. 27-Oct. 2	mob
female	Nunes (first Fish Docks Sept. 28)	Sept. 28-29	AG, WG, EM, <i>et al.</i>
male	Fort Funston, S.F.	Sept. 30	DM
female	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Oct. 1-2	DE, RS
Blackburnian Warbler (total 4 or 5)			
1	Farallones	Sept. 18	PRBO
1	Lincoln Park, S.F.	Sept. 20	BJ, JMcG, AHa
1	Farallones	Sept. 22	PRBO
1	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Sept. 28	KY, DMcC
1 (same?)	Mendoza	Sept. 29-Oct. 2	GA, EM, AM, mob
Chestnut-sided Warbler (total 4)			
1	Nunes	Sept. 27	RS, mob
1	Middle Lake, G.G. Park	Sept. 29	DM
1	Lincoln Park, S.F.	Sept. 29	DEd
1	Fish Docks	Sept. 29-30	mob

Blackpoll Warbler (total 35)

1	Lincoln Park, S.F.	Sept. 11	JR, <i>et al.</i>
1	Farallones	Sept. 12-14	PRBO
2 more	Farallones	Sept. 14	PRBO
1	Farallones	Sept. 17-18	PRBO
2 more	Farallones	Sept. 18	PRBO
1	Fish Docks	Sept. 18	JE
1	Farallones	Sept. 22	PRBO
1	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Sept. 23	GA, mob
2	Nunes	Sept. 23	SL, JM, mob
1	Mendoza	Sept. 24-25	RS, <i>et al.</i>
1	Nunes	Sept. 25	JM, <i>et al.</i>
1	Fire Station, Ft. Cronkhite	Sept. 26	DMcC, KY
1	Pioneer Log Cabin, G.G. Park	Sept. 26	DEd
1	Fish Docks	Sept. 27	JM, mob
1	Mendoza	Sept. 27	RS
1	Mendoza Schoolhouse	Sept. 27	RS
1	Mendoza	Sept. 30-Oct. 2	mob
1	Nunes	Oct. 1	JR, BR
2	Fish Docks	Oct. 1(1 to Oct. 2)	DE, JR, BR
1(2?)	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Oct. 2	RS, JM
1	Esplanade Park, P.G.	Sept. 29-Oct. 2	BDP, LCB, EH, DR
2 more	Esplanade Park, P.G.	Sept. 30-Oct. 2	BDP, LCB, EH, DR
2 (total 5)	Esplanade Park, P.G.	Oct. 2	DR
3	Crespi Pond, P.G.	Sept. 30	EH
3	Point Lobos	Sept. 30	EH

Prairie Warbler (total 8)

1	Fish Docks	Sept. 9	BDP, <i>et al.</i>
1	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Sept. 18	JE
3	Nunes	Sept. 24	SL, JM, RS, mob
(2 from Sept. 23, 2 to Sept. 25, 1 (same?) Sept. 27)			
1	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Sept. 24	RS
1	Point Lobos	Sept. 30	EH
1	Fish Docks	Oct. 1	JR, BR

Palm Warbler (total 48)

1	Farallones	Sept. 18	PRBO
2	Point Diablo	Sept. 20	RS
1	Nunes	Sept. 22	JM, <i>et al.</i>
2	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Sept. 27-28	RS, mob
4 more	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Sept. 28	EM, mob
(apparently 3 of the 6 to Nunes Sept. 28; 1 at Lighthouse to Oct. 2)			
1 more	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Oct. 1-2	DE, <i>et al.</i>
1 more	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Oct. 2	mob
3	Fish Docks	Sept. 27	RS, mob
(apparently 2 of the 3 to Willows Sept. 27; 1 at Fish Docks to Sept. 28)			
2	Mendoza Schoolhouse	Sept. 27	RS, BL
2	Drakes Beach	Sept. 27	RS
2	RCA Station	Sept. 28	JL, SFB, KLB
3 (from Lighthouse?)	Nunes	Sept. 28 (1 to Oct. 1)	mob
1 more	Nunes	Oct. 1	mob
1	Mendoza	Sept. 29	BJ
1	Drakes Beach	Sept. 30	JM, <i>et al.</i>
1	Mendoza	Oct. 1-2	DE, mob
1	Fish Docks	Oct. 1-2	DR, JR, DE, mob
1	Drakes Beach	Oct. 2	RS
1	Llmanour	Sept. 30	BL

1	Fire Station, Fort Cronkhite	Sept. 30	KY
2	Rail Ponds, Bodega Bay	Sept. 29	MG, HG, NC, BC
1 banded	Palomarin	late Sept.	PRBO
1 felinized	Bolinas	late Sept.	BM
3	Lincoln Park, S.F.	Sept. 29	DEd
5	Fort Funston, S.F.	Sept. 30	DM
1	Coyote Hills Park	Sept. 29	LP
2	Watsonville Sewage Ponds	Sept. 29	mob
2	Salinas River Mouth	Sept. 29 (1 to Sept. 30)	mob
1	Esplanade Park, P.G.	Sept. 29-30	BDP, LCB, <i>et al.</i>
1 more	Esplanade Park, P.G.	Sept. 30-Oct. 2	BDP, LCB, EH, DR
1	Presidio of Monterey	Sept. 30	BDP, LCB, EH
Ovenbird (total 6)			
1	Farallones	Sept. 20	PRBO
1	Fish Docks	Sept. 23	JML, EM, <i>et al.</i>
1 dead	San Francisco	Oct. 1	MK, SK
1	Nunes	Oct. 2	JM, <i>et al.</i>
1	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Oct. 2	mob
1	Pacific Grove Nat. Hist. Mus.	Oct. 2	VY
Northern Waterthrush (total 4)			
2	Carmel River Mouth	Sept. 6	RS
1	Environmental Center, Tilden Park	Sept. 13	TL, LS
1	Farallones	Sept. 19-21	PRBO
Mourning Warbler (total 2)			
1 imm.	Farallones	Sept. 14	PRBO
1 imm. male	Fish Docks	Sept. 27-Oct. 1	RS, mob
Hooded Warbler (total 1)			
1 male	Muir Woods returned	Sept. 23	JiL, PV, <i>et al.</i>
Canada Warbler (total 2)			
1	Bodega Bay	Sept. 25-26	NC
1	Nunes	Oct. 2	CB, <i>et al.</i>
American Redstart (total 23)			
1 ad. male	Muddy Hollow	Sept. 4	JE
2	Lincoln Park, S.F.	Sept. 2(1 to Sept. 29)	mob, DEd
1 more	Lincoln Park, S.F.	Sept. 16	EM, AM
1	Farallones	Sept. 18	PRBO
1	Farallones	Sept. 22	PRBO
1	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Sept. 19	RS
2	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Sept. 23-26	GA, mob
1	Nunes	Sept. 25-30	JM, mob
2 more	Nunes	Sept. 27	RS, mob
(1 banded and tailless stayed several days)			
1 more			
(total 4)	Nunes	Sept. 28	KLB, SFB, JL
(of the 4, 3 to Sept. 30, 2 to Oct. 2)			
1	Abandoned Ranch	Sept. 27-28	BL, JL
2 more	Abandoned Ranch	Sept. 28	JL
2	Drakes Beach	Sept. 27-28 (1 to Sept. 30)	RS, JL, AG
2 (1 ad. male)	Spaletta	Sept. 28	JL, JM, <i>et al.</i>
2	Battery Wallace	Sept. 30	BJ, KY
1	Esplanade Park, P.G.	Sept. 29	BDP, LCB

Although an evaluation of the abundances of these warblers relative

to our average fall expectations awaits the final tally, some species were obviously proportionally underrepresented (Tennessee, Chestnut-sided, Bay-breasted) while others produced excellent numbers (Northern Parula, Prairie, Palm, Mourning). The Palm Warblers were especially abundant for September; October is their prime month.

OTHER EASTERN VAGRANTS

A **Least Flycatcher** at Pt. Reyes Lighthouse Sept. 27 showed all the classic field marks (JM). Surprisingly, only one Red-eyed Vireo accompanied the warblers to discovery, near Olema Marsh Sept. 2 (JE). Three Bobolinks found the Farallones, Sept. 18, 20 and 22 (PRBO), followed by three mainland birds: one at Pt. Reyes Lighthouse Sept. 27 (RS) and 2 at Mendoza Schoolhouse Sept. 30 (RS). Two Orchard Orioles were found, one at Pajaro River at Watsonville Sewage Ponds Sept. 9 (GW) and one at Fish Docks and nearby Willows Oct. 2 (CB, JM, *et al.*). A Northern Oriole at Nunes Ranch Sept. 19 was identified as a "Baltimore" type (RS). The male Summer Tanager at Lincoln Park ("Land's End") remained at least through Sept. 29 (mob, DEd).

Much more numerous as spring vagrants, only 3 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and 2 Indigo Buntings appeared. Male and female Rose-breasts visited Pt. Reyes Lighthouse on consecutive days, Sept. 23 (SL) and 24 (RS), and another male came to the Fish Docks Oct. 2 (mob). The Indigos (both males) were much earlier) Sept. 2 in Belmont (FN, LN) and Sept. 3-5 in Pacific Grove (LCB, BDP, RS). Northern California's 16th **Dickcissel** visited the Farallones Aug. 29 (PRBO). The fall's first Lark Bunting there dropped in Sept. 20 (PRBO). The month's only "Slate-colored" Junco was at the RCA Station, Pt. Reyes, Sept. 28 (JL). By Sept. 22 the Farallones had had 5 Clay-colored Sparrows, an adult Aug. 31-Sept. 4 and 2 immatures each on Sept. 18 and 22 (PRBO), whereas the mainland's first was Sept. 30 at Presidio of Monterey (BDP, LCB, EH).

MONTANE INVADERS

Red-breasted Nuthatches have been abundant and seemingly in every forest, suburb and vagrant trap. Thus it is even more interesting that a **Pygmy Nuthatch** was heard *and* seen clearly in Montclair Sept. 14 (SLu, JL) for one of our only convincing East Bay reports ever. (One was heard there about the same time last year.) Surprised at its accidental status there, many birders wonder why so few "fly across from Marin or San Francisco." Perhaps *none* do; in my opinion the most likely origin for these wanderers is the Sierra Nevada or more distant montane area. From one to three Evening Grosbeaks have been seen in Tilden Park since Sept. 11 (GH, SA, MG, HG, NC) and one was heard

near Jenner Sept. 29 (MG, *et al.*). One even (-ing?) reached the Farallones Sept. 20 (PRBO). A flock of up to 15 Red Crossbills has inhabited Lincoln Park, San Francisco, since Sept. 4 (mob).

OTHER PASSERINES

This section includes Alaskan/Siberian vagrants, other western vagrants and notable birds whose ranges allow a variety of possible origins. Tropical Kingbirds surely must come from western Mexico. Two arrived in September: Point Pinos Sept. 21 (DR) and near Spaletta Ranch Sept. 29 (BB, *et al.*). Sage Thrashers on the Farallones Sept. 12 (PRBO) and in Del Puerto Canyon Sept. 22 (CB) deserve mention. The Wastonville **White Wagtail** remained at least through Sept. 22 (mob, DJ), by which time moult had greatly altered its plumage. Less obliging than this wagtail was a bird that flew by the observer at Bodega Bay Sept. 16 but was never refound. It was identified as a **Yellow Wagtail** (BMcC). Although the view left something to be desired, the observer knows Yellow Wagtail from Alaskan experience gained in the employ of the finder of last fall's first state record. Northern California's second record of **Great-tailed Grackle** was of a pair roosting in Walton Square, San Francisco, Sept. 12-19 (DE). Might the male have been the one that just spent a year in the Aquatic Park/Palace of Fine Arts area?

The Farallon Blue Grosbeaks (Aug. 22 and Sept. 5 - PRBO) might have come from California or an eastern state. The same is true of the Vesper Sparrows: Farallones Sept. 15-21 (PRBO) and Hall Ranch Sept. 18 (JE). The immature Black-throated Sparrow on the Farallones Sept. 11-18 (PRBO) was hatched in the arid west. Although only tens of miles out of range the Sage Sparrow at Pt. Reyes Lighthouse Sept. 27-30 (RS, EM, *et al.*) was outnumbered by at least a dozen species of eastern vagrants. This is common for western species on the outer Point or the Farallones. Think about the various mechanisms of vagrancy in this light. Similarly, Brewer's Sparrows stopped on the Farallones Sept. 11 and 20 (PRBO) and in Robinson Canyon Sept. 5 (RS). The initial Lapland Longspur was found at Hall Ranch Sept. 22 (JP, mob) and 3-5 were reported by month's end (WG, AG).

Observers: Steve Abbors, Peter Allen, Garth Alton, Karen L. Bailey, Stephen F. Bailey, Laurence C. Binford, Clark Blake (CB, Courtney Buechert (CBu), Betty Burrige, Chris Carpenter, Bill Clow, Becky Conzett, Nancy Conzett, Alan Craig, Dave DeSante, David Edwards (DEd), Ed Ely, Dick Erickson (DE), Jules Evens, Leora Feeney, Bud Fry, Al Chiorso, Wilma Ghiorso, David Good, Ed Greaves, Helen Green, Michael Green, Ed Harper, Alan Harvey (AHa), Alan Hopkins (AH), Ken Howard, George Hugenberg, Dick Johnson, Bill Jones, Michael

Kelly, Shirley Kelly, Jim Lane (JiL), Jeri M. Langham, Steve Laymon (SL), Bill Lenarz, Ted Lewis, Donna Lion (DLi), Debi Love (DL), John Luther (JL), Susanne Luther (SLu), Akiko Makishima, Eugene Makishima, Bill Manolis, Maric Mans, many observers (mob), Brian McCaffery, Dianne McClung, Joc McGee, Joe Morlan (JM), Jim Morris (JiM), Dan Murphy, Fran Nelson, Leroy Nelson, Point Reyes Bird Observatory (Farallon report thanks to Dave Shuford), Western Field Ornithologists, Benjamin D. Parmeter, John Parmeter, Linda Prairie, Bill Pursell, Bob Richmond, Jean Richmond, Don Roberson, Elsie Roemer, Mary Louise Roscgay, Don Schmoldt (DSc), Bill Shelmerdine, Dave Shuford (DS), Los Angeles Audubon Society, Rich Stallcup, Larry Stark, Bruce Travis, Peter Vickery, Gil West, Jack Whetstone, Peter White, Mike Wihler, Steve Wilson, Vern Yadon, Keiko Yammane, Gary Zamzow.

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(phone 548-9507; or Karen Bailey at 642-3327 8 a.m.-noon, 1-5 p.m.)

Oakland Christmas Bird Count

The 1979 Oakland Christmas Bird Count is scheduled for Sunday, December 16, and we hope to have as many participate as possible. If you participated last year you should have received a letter asking you to volunteer again. Because experience in a count area is valuable we would like to ask people to sign up for the same area they covered before.

Feeder coverage is also extremely important. It is the feeders that give us many of our national records for high species counts. Feeders also attract and keep rarities. If you have a feeder and want to count birds please contact Susan Hilinski at 841-6253. We also need someone who would be willing to stay home on December 16 and answer the phone in case anyone with a feeder has a question about the Christmas count or the identity of a bird. If you would be willing to do this please call one of the compilers.

If you would like to join in the count and have not received a letter or if you want more information please phone the compilers or the GGAS office at 843-2222. New birders are welcome.

Last year we had 202 observers who found 172 species. We also had a lot of rain. This year if we have more observers perhaps we will find more species and hopefully less rain. Join us.

—DAVID RICE (865-7826), HELEN GREEN (526-5943),
Christmas Count Compilers

Conservation Notes

BAN ON SALE OF NATIVE CALIFORNIA REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS. The California Department of Fish and Game has approved a proposal banning the sale of native reptiles and amphibians in the pet trade as of September 1. Commercial collectors, under a strict permit system, will still be able to collect and sell to scientific and educational institutions but orders must be approved by the DFG. Hopefully other states will now provide protective regulations for their native species; Arizona already prohibits the sale of their wildlife and Nevada is considering regulations similar to California's. If you find any native reptiles or amphibians for sale please notify the DFG's Wildlife Protection section at (213) 590-5132.

CARTER SIGNS TELlico BILL. On September 26 President Carter signed the appropriations bill giving the go-ahead on Tellico Dam. Conservationists were almost certain he would veto the bill but instead Carter dealt another anti-environmental blow. This bill seriously undermines the Endangered Species Act by providing a precedent for exemptions — the snail darter in this case — as well as giving the green light for further pork barrel water projects.

GGAS WORKING TO SAVE MONO LAKE. The Golden Gate Audubon Society has joined forces with other Bay Area environmental groups to form a Mono Lake Coalition. The purpose of the Coalition is to better coordinate efforts to save the lake. We support a return to Mono Lake's 1970 water level of 6,388 ft. as a minimum, subject to monitoring of the various bio-geographical factors. This would protect the Negit Island gull rookery and restore the salinity-brine shrimp balance. If you are interested in joining please contact the GGAS office.

CABALLO HILLS DEVELOPER DONATES PARK LAND. The developer of the largest privately owned piece of land remaining within Oakland has agreed to set aside a large portion of the tract as park land. The Challenge Development Company will turn over 400 of the 680 total acres of the proposed site to the East Bay Regional Park District for a low-intensive use wildlife preserve and open space area.

The site consists of a west-facing slope of a north-south ridge and a heavily wooded parallel valley. The valley and westerly slope are relatively free from any recent human disturbance. The location of the land is just south of Merritt College and north of the Oak Knoll Naval Medical Center.

ANIMAL SYMPOSIUM AT UC SANTA CRUZ. A symposium devoted to animals, their rights and the areas where they intersect with humans will take place on Saturday, November 3, at UC Santa Cruz. If you believe that animals have inherent beauty and dignity and are worthy of our respect and admiration come and meet other like-minded humans for a day of animal celebration. Speakers include Barry Lopez, author of *Wolves and Men*, Paul Shepard, author of *Thinking Animals*, Wymberley Coerr of California Defenders of Wildlife and Richard Spotts of the Animal Protection Institute. There will also be music and entertainment. For more information, including carpooling, call the GGAS office.

Order Your GGAS Publications Now

The two recent GGAS publications, *Birds of Northern California* and the *1980 California Birders' Calendar and Almanac*, are getting enthusiastic buyer response and both make admirable Christmas gifts. The book, an up-to-date distributional analysis of all species of birds occurring in Northern California, is available through the GGAS office for \$5. postpaid. California residents add \$.30 tax (BART county residents add 6.5% for a total of \$.33 tax) and \$.75 postage and handling.

The calendar, beautifully illustrated by Pedro Gonzalez, includes birding notes for the state compiled by Stephen Bailey. It can be ordered from the GGAS office for \$4.50 plus \$.27 tax (BART county residents add 6.5% for a total of \$.30 tax) and \$.75 postage and handling. In an unfortunate error on the order form in last month's *Gull* the price was given as \$4.80 before tax; the Editor regrets. Supplies of the calendar are limited, so order promptly.

An Excellent Sierra Guide

A Sierra Club Naturalist's Guide to the Sierra Nevada— Stephen Whitney. 1979. vii + 526 pp. Paperback. \$8.95.

This is an excellent book but perhaps too much a reference book to be viewed as a field guide even though it is of a size that is easy to put in a pack, about four by seven inches. The thickness gives a clue to its nature; it is astonishingly full of good information arranged in a logical and accessible manner. Mr. Whitney writes well and he writes as one who, like a good teacher, seems eager to share his knowledge and insight and eager to encourage the newcomer to appreciate and understand the splendor of both the grand view and the intimate detail.

The book is organized in sections that describe the geology, the climate and weather and then the various ecological regions: the western foothills, the forest belt, the alpine region and the eastern slope. What distinguishes the content of all this is the depth of information that is provided. Even if you have never read anything about geology, weather or ecosystems you will understand a great deal more about them when you complete your first reading of this most comprehensive book. And you will have a good beginning appreciation of the magnitude of the Sierra Nevada and its multiplicity of habitats.

This Naturalist's Guide does not replace a field guide to birds or wildflowers but serves as a complement to them because the discussion of flora and fauna is restricted to those species that characterize each region. It is illustrated by the author with helpful charts and diagrams as well as sketches of plants and animals. There are several pages of color illustrations of plants. There is a long list of selected reference books for further reading which misses two of my choices; *Birds of the Yosemite Sierra* by David Gaines and *Up and Down California* by William Brewer. Small quibble. There is also an extensive index. This is a welcome addition to the available literature about the Sierra.

—ELISE WHITE

Errata

On page 130 of the *October Gull*, the first sentence in the second paragraph of the review of *Birds of Southeastern Arizona* should read, "There is a section on finding special birds which would be much better if there were more on sought-after species such as *Montezuma Quail* and less on abundant species such as Cactus Wren and Curve-billed Thrasher." (Italics added.)

Cooper Ornithological Society's Second Fall Meeting

The second meeting of the Northern Section of the Cooper Ornithological Society for the fall season will be held on Monday, November 12, at 8 p.m. in Room 2503 Life Sciences Building, University of California, Berkeley. Dr. Robert K. Colwell, UC Berkeley, will present a talk on "Morphology and behavior of coexisting hummingbird species." The meeting is open to anyone with a strong interest in the biology of birds.

Snowy Plover Assistance Sought

The Point Reyes Bird Observatory is in urgent need of volunteers to assist in a statewide effort to discover the wintering status of the Snowy Plover. If you would be able to survey a beach in your vicinity at least once a month from November 1979 to June 1980 to look for banded Snowy Plovers please contact Carolyn Frederiksen, 529 Vista Del Mar, Aptos, CA 95003. A packet with detailed information about the survey will be sent to all volunteers to assist you in getting started.

Snow Goose Neck Collar Resighting Effort

A declining population of Snow Geese which summer on Wrangel Island, Russia, spend their winters along our Pacific coast. Several hundred birds have been trapped on Wrangel and banded with orange, coded neck collars; over half of these birds have been registered in North America. The Pilchuck Audubon chapter in Washington State is coordinating resighting-reporting efforts. If you wish to participate or want information, write to the chapter, attn. Martha Jordan, 527-212th St. SW, Bothwell, WA 98011.

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Send address changes to office promptly; Post Office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$18 per year (individual); \$21 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$5 per year; single issues 50¢. High school and college student membership \$13.50 per year. Senior citizen individual, \$13.50, senior citizen family, \$15.50.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

The Gull deadline is the first of the month for the following month.